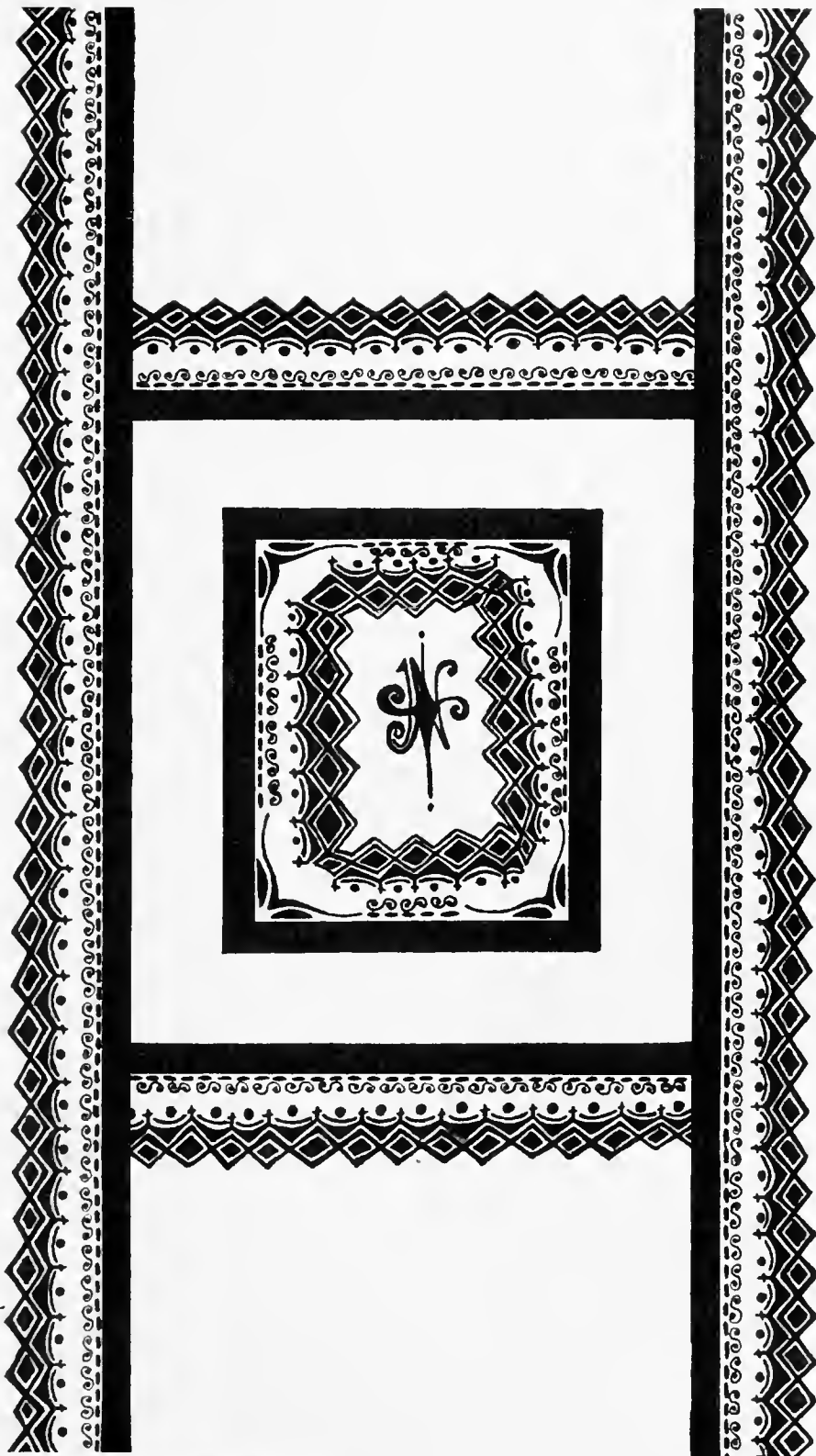


Legacy 04-02

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Legacy

04-05

Editors:

Scott Damazo

Kelly McAuliffe

Faculty Judges:

Lauré Chamberlain

Lisa Diller

Ed Guthero

Jodi Ruf

Introduction

When we signed on as the 2004-2005 *Legacy* editors, we had no idea what we were getting into. Last April, compiling Southern's creative writing publication sounded fun and easily manageable – we had a whole year, didn't we? But as every student knows, distant deadlines are no threat to habitual procrastination, and by this April, editing the *Legacy* sounded more than a little stressful.

We had already determined that diversity would be our emphasis. In the past, the *Legacy* had catered to creative writing, especially that of English majors. We decided to re-introduce photography and artwork to broaden the content and to appeal for submissions to students across campus.

Through this we hoped to recognize outstanding artists in various departments and emphasize the close relationship between visual and written art. Both are creative though structured forms of expression, and both deserve publication.

Having established this goal of diversity, we faced the challenge of gathering content. To our surprise, we were flooded with submissions. In fact, we received far more than we could use.

Even better than the quantity of submissions was their quality. Students eagerly shared their talent and passion through prose, song, and artwork. All that needed to be done was to create a compilation that would do their work justice.

The only problem was our complete ignorance of layout, Quark, and Mac computers in general. Melanie Eddlemon, who might easily have more patience than Job, gave us a crash-course in design, and we set to work.

The following is what we came up with. We don't pretend to have equaled the quality of student submission; we have simply provided the frame. And we hope that our presentation of student work will increase awareness of and support for the arts on campus and spur even greater participation in the future. Enjoy.

Thanks to all who contributed (especially Nissa Haugen, who designed the cover months in advance) – reviewing your work has truly been a privilege.

We could never have completed this project without the help of the School of Visual Art & Design's staff and students. We are very much indebted to Ed Guthero, who helped us with layout and printing and allowed us to use his computer at all hours of the day and night.

Scott Damazo & Kelly McAuliffe



Alan Darmody

Three days after Christmas you
carefully navigate
the regular roads.
This corner,
the snow drifted so far
two lanes turn into one.

*I'm different, you know.
Worse maybe. I can't
get through the day
without coffee.*

Your smile like
a straight pin through my
lung. You don't
believe me.

*– Don't laugh. I'm
different.*

Outside your window:
twenty-seven late geese flying south.
South, away.
They know:

There is something about
back roads, snowdrifts,
Pennsylvania at six o'clock
(What is it?) that keeps
you seventeen
forever.

There is something about
home that
doesn't let you change.

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Yellow Number Five

Ivan Colon

When Jesus left the planet two thousand years ago/He said He would be back/when He returned He made a home/in this girl I know/with purest eyes/and a heart deep as the sea/Her front porch smells of cinnamon/her home is always warm/but she says she's never known real love/when all that seems constant/shakes her to her knees/please remind her//Oh love that will not let her go/please if you don't mind/just remind her where you are/and Jesus from Your place inside/reach around and hold her/when it's dark and cold/Now I have never been a fan of artificial anything/from banana-flavored candy to that fake plastic wood/but I'm just a shadow/of the greatest Man of all/I'll disappear and die apart from Him/the secret of living/is to live the way He did/I guess that qualifies for imitation//Oh love that will not let me go/please if you don't mind/just remind me where you are/and Jesus from Your place inside/reach around and hold me/when it's dark and cold/True love flows from me/like fresh OJ from a bottle of Sunny D/it's all sugar highs and yellow number five/I've been much too long deprived of everything that's true/real love flows from up above/when you love the Man whose hands were nailed down to a tree//Oh love that will not let us go/please if you don't mind/just remind us where you are/and Jesus from Your place inside/reach around and hold us/when it's dark and cold



Natalie Ford

Little bouts of culture shock can hit at any time. They're more likely when you're alone, you're suffering a mad migraine, it's pouring rain, and that stupid umbrella of yours keeps nailing everyone you pass in the head. The Japanese usually forgive a *gaijin* (foreigner) for most faux pas committed in ignorance, but when your sopping umbrella beats them against a wall, the understanding smiles and happy nods are GONE.

You're on your way to the store because you ran out of shampoo this morning. Your head is killing you, your students were disobedient, distracted, and downright evil, and all you want to do is strip these panty-hose off (Who INVENTED these things? They should be shot. In the HEAD. REPEATEDLY.), snuggle under your duvet on three layers of futon (Stupid things are so THIN.) and SLEEP, but no, you have to brave the torrential downpours of the newly begun typhoon season to get SHAMPOO.

After about forty minutes wandering around a store about the size of your closet back home, you're fighting back tears. You can't find the shampoo because you can't READ anything, and you're so frustrated that if one more employee yells "*Irrashaimasei!*" at you, you are liable to rip her head off. To top it all off, the sound system is belting out the older version of "American Pie," and you're just longing for America, Walmart, and English at this point.

So you grab what you think might resemble shampoo, count out entirely too much change, and bolt. You're walking home and searching every shop you pass for something American, something in English, something FAMILIAR. No luck until you pass a coffee shop.

Coffee. Familiar. Warm. Reassuring. You duck into the store and search the menu (which is in ENGLISH! Praise the LORD!) for something soothing.

Then you begin to feel stupid. After all, you're a missionary in Japan. For a YEAR. You can't be rampaging the country for an American pleasure every time you get frustrated at the grocery store, especially because that's bound to happen on a daily basis. "*FINE*," you think, and order the strangest thing on the menu.

"Coffee Jelly," you say confidently to the smiley girl behind the counter. *Coffee what!? WHAT did I just order?*

She takes your money and places a tray in front of you. On the tray is what appears to be a single-serve liquid creamer, but from prior experience you know it's actually liquid sugar. A genius invention, you must concede. In the middle of the tray sits a small, glass bowl half full of a brown substance with what looks like whipped cream on top.

"*Oh dear*," you think. "*I was expecting a DRINK, what is THIS?*"

You sit down next to one of the twenty chain-smoking Japanese customers that crowd the small shop, and bow your head.

You rush through a form prayer, essentially turning it into one, long word – "Dear Lord, please bless this . . . THING . . . and help-it-nourish-and-strengthen-my-body-Amen." Quite honestly, you're just a little bitter at God right now for sending you here. You dip your spoon into the quivering brown mass, battling anticipation and revulsion.



Melita Pujic

You taste. You swish it around your mouth.

And you discover that the Japanese will turn ANYTHING into Jell-O. Including coffee. And the whipped cream is actually vanilla soft serve. And you LOVE IT.

Then you realize something. You may not have all the conveniences and comforts of home, but home certainly doesn't have coffee jelly. Even though you're homesick, lonely, frustrated, and angry at God, He brought you here for a reason and has more blessings in store for you than just coffee jelly. *"I think I can make it a year here after all,"* you decide. *"God, me, and coffee jelly."*

[unclear]

Lee Andrews

I am but a poor man.
Poor, I say, in monetary terms
Due to the beast that lurks at my door.
Brief respite within my home
Has only made me a restless boor.

I can only imagine the poor drunkard
Whose spindly legs buckled
Under the weight of the world.

Within his spinning mind
Were the words of beauty
That God placed upon
Foundations untold.

Bangkok Martin

Whitni McDonald

Every sense in my body is jolted awake.

Clashing flashing colors abuse my vision.
Rotting festering scents attack my nose.
Clanging banging noises thrash my eardrum.
Stinging fizzing salt drips in my mouth.
Clamming crushing heat molests my shoulders.

Inside, my heart blasts cannon-fiery wonder
As tuk-tuk horns and whistles.
Dread-locked bums with gristle.
Saffron-robed epistles,

Jostle past.

Autumn

Judy Clippinger

I went to the woods when the leaves were new.
I walked as they glistened with drops of dew,
When those who had come to the woods were few,
My heart was full of singing.

I went to the woods when the leaves were green.
They whispered above me. The sylvan scene
Was filled with fine creepers and bushes pristine
In nature freely growing.

I went to the woods when the leaves were gold,
And yellow, and orange, and red. These bold,
Gay colors, in season, had lost their hold.
The forest now was dying.

I went to the woods when the leaves were brown.
They crunched and they rustled. The golden crown
The forest had worn had now been cast down,
And all the winds cried, mourning.

I went to the woods when the leaves were gone
And looked at the landscape now starkly drawn,
The canvas of white it was inked upon,
And one lone leaf still hanging.



It was time for the annual Girls' Club retreat in the heart of the Smoky Mountains. My friends and I were juniors and had already been on the retreat twice before. By now, we had significantly improved our ghetto camping skills. No longer were we clueless as to how to string all the poles together to set up our tent; no longer did it take forty-five minutes to set up the propane stove or get a fire roaring. We had experience. We had all the know-how. More importantly, we had style.

After drawing up a list of all the necessary food and supplies, it was my lot to find a tent. I knew just the perfect one. A friend of the family owned a HUGE, two-room tent. I figured one room for all of the luggage and the other for my two friends and me to sleep in comfort. It would be perfect.

Friday was pretty much spent by the time our school vans pulled into the Tremont Hills Campground. Ninety-five girls poured forth from vans and buses, scouring the new territory like a plague of locusts.

Megan, Emily, and I headed straight for a site near the creek and began to set up camp. After a few seconds of rummaging through the contents of the tent bag, we began to notice a problem.

"There sure are a lot of pieces in here," Megan commented.

"Are there any instructions?" Emily asked.

"Hmm...I don't see any. But we're smart. I'm sure we can figure it out," I replied confidently. Emily and Megan gave me tired looks but turned determinedly to the task at hand.

This tent was unlike any tent we had ever seen before. Instead of pre-connected poles, there were about 30 different pieces of pipe floating about in addition to the actual tent. Each pipe had a number at one end that corresponded with a similar number on the end of a different pipe.

"Looks like we have to connect the pipes," Emily said.

Megan laid out the pipes while Emily and I began rapidly twisting them together. What had first appeared to be a daunting task was turning out to be easier than anticipated. The tent was almost fully raised when we ran out of poles.

The three of us stood back and stared thoughtfully at our handiwork. The tent was supporting itself, but we were missing the two poles that would raise the peak of the tent to its proper height. As a result, on either side of the middle of the tent, the ceiling sagged like wrinkled skin.

"You know," Emily began, "if we can drag some rocks up from the creek bed, we might be able to raise the poles enough to level out the ceiling."

Of course, Emily would give a logical solution to the problem at hand; she was the smartest girl in our class with a ridiculously inflated GPA of 4.3. At her suggestion, we began to laboriously haul the biggest rocks we could unearth from the side of the rushing creek. I began to understand how Sisyphus felt, forever pushing a rock up a hill only to have it roll back down to the bottom. The rock idea was a good one, but we couldn't gather enough to lift the tent to its proper height.

"At least it's up, however precariously. As long as it doesn't rain, we should be alright for the weekend," I said.

The three of us eyed the sky critically. The once friendly sky looked slightly menacing as dark clouds started rolling in from the west.

"Maybe it won't rain hard?" I smiled in false hope while Emily only scowled in return. Deciding to put our tent anxieties behind us, we set about making couscous over our propane stove. As we were cleaning up from dinner, it started to sprinkle. Emily, Megan, and I looked at the sky and then at our tent with unease.

"Lord, if it rains, help it not to pour," I petitioned the sky before turning in for the night.

As soon as we had closed our eyes, a thunderstorm began in earnest. Rain hammered at the sides of our tent with the help of gale-force winds.

"It's like God is taking our picture and laughing at us," I muttered as lightning illuminated our tent every few seconds.

"At least somebody's getting a kick out of this," Emily said.

Despite the storm, the three of us were asleep within an hour. I awoke unexpectedly in the night to find that our ceiling was looking frighteningly close. I poked Emily in the ribs. "Errnnhh," she groaned and rolled over. I turned to Megan and whispered, "Megs! Megan, wake up!"

Megan opened a bleary eye. "What?" she croaked.

"Our ceiling is pregnant with water."

Her one open eye rolled toward the ceiling pausing there briefly before both eyes snapped open in shock. Before she could say a word, I was already out of my sleeping bag and attempting to push off the water from the inside of the tent. *W'boorb!* The water cascaded from off the roof of the tent, splashed off the sides, and flowed right underneath. Water was seeping into the tent from the floor.

"My sleeping bag is getting soaked!" Megan exclaimed. At this, Emily finally sat up in her sleeping bag.

"Girls, what's going on?" Emily asked, eyeing us balefully. Nothing quite inspires fear as much as an irritable redhead at 1 a.m.

"Well, you see the thing is," I began but just shrugged helplessly and pointed to the ceiling. The roof of our tent was already sagging under the weight of more water. It took Emily a few seconds to register the gravity of the situation.

"Stupid tent," she muttered and disappeared into the bottom of her sleeping bag.

For the next hour, every five minutes Megan and I would take turns pushing the water off the roof of the tent.

By morning, we had successfully prevented the tent from collapsing in on itself, but our sleeping bags were all fairly damp with the water that had crept in from the floor.

I have never been one to rise with the sun, but I was more than ready to crawl out of the tent once the first rays of sunlight began to creep over the campground. Groggy, damp, tired, and a bit dispirited, we stumbled out of the tent and surveyed our surroundings. Apparently, we weren't the only girls that had had problems during the thunderstorm that night. One two-man tent had a tiny river running through it, and its sleeping pads were floating on half an inch of water.

"It could have been worse," I said, turning to Megan. "At least we didn't get washed away in the night."

Luckily, wet things are easy to remedy. Emily, Megan, and I grabbed our sleeping bags and pillows and trudged up to the laundromat where we tossed everything into a dryer. In fact, the dryer looked so inviting that I crawled in one myself. My friends shut the door behind me, but thankfully stopped short of starting a cycle.

It's not very often one gets shut into a dryer: it's a tight fit and pretty warm, sort of how I'd imagine my mother's womb was back in the day. One need never fear getting caught inside a dryer because I know for a fact that it can be opened from the inside.

After everything was dry, we were in much better spirits. We were even blessed with beautiful weather for the rest of the weekend!

It wasn't until we were taking down camp on Sunday that we received a rather unexpected surprise. I was disconnecting the pipes from each other when I heard something clink to the ground. There, near my foot, was one of the missing pipes.

"Nuh, uh!" I exclaimed. Several seconds later, I discovered the second missing piece. Megan and Emily were staring at me incredulously. Then we all burst into laughter.

Apparently, we weren't missing anything at all. The "missing" poles were simply hidden inside each other. It turned out we had the solution to our problem the entire time!

We decided that next time we wanted to go camping, we'd check to make sure we had all the proper pieces first.

Dany Treiyer



Measure Truth

Serena Eddlemon

Verse 1:

Excuse me, ma'am,
Do you have another size?
This one's just
A little bit too tight.
And do you have that one in blue?
If you don't mind, I'd like to try that too.

If it doesn't really match,
Just pick a new design.
Always finding
A new way to define.
Now this is Christianity,
Truth perfectly conformed to me.

Chorus:

Cause if it's not comfortable to wear
Or if people start to stare,
I take out my sewing kit.
From head to toe, I take a measure,
And then I begin to tailor
A faith that fits.

Verse 2:

A little bit of this
With some of those on the side.
Just pick out the things
That I don't like.
Make an addition or subtraction –
It's all about my current satisfaction

Bridge:

But it's a one-size-fits-all faith,
And the truth cannot be reshaped.

Chorus:

Cause if it's not comfortable to wear
Or if people start to stare,
I take out my sewing kit.
From head to toe I take a measure,
And then I begin to tailor
A faith that fits.

Make things a little more convenient,
Be a little bit more lenient.
Bend and twist and mold
Until it can be sold.

Arranged for Your Convenience

Kelly McAuliffe

Let's make a deal –
a comfortable
partnership of sorts.
I'll cook dinner on most weeknights
if you'll wash the dishes.
Besides,
soul mates are
archaic and the grass needs
mowing and an unshared bed is
cold.
So you'll pay the mortgage on
the house I've cleaned, and
maybe I'll love you
someday.



Erika Jenkins

Oct. 10, 2004

Heidi Thompkins

My country is my own now, and this land
Is my land just as much as it is yours.
The ballot feels like power in my hand.
The State might have the power to wage wars,
But voters make the democratic State,
And I from Florida might tip the scales
Of one electoral vote. I can create
Part of the ruling power, and, if it fails,
I can vote to make changes. Presidents
Are just one part of ballot space, and now
At twenty-one I wield the instruments
Of suffrage. What I must decide is how.
My country, my America, my state,
This is the privilege that makes you great.



Brett Meliti



Church. It's a word that stirs many emotions. Some are warm and fuzzy while others are frigid and painfully sharp. We all have different ideas of what church is, what it was, and what it should be. But we all share the same memories. We sang the same songs. We studied the same stained-glass window of Christ. We listened to the same children's choir wander through the notes of "Jesus Loves Me." We listened, bursting with pride. We read the same Bible, loved the same God, and felt the same tingle of joy during the last verse of "Amazing Grace." We grew up at church.

I grew up in the Dunlap Seventh-day Adventist Church. I remember getting into trouble when I was three or four. After repeated warnings and more red-headed defiance, Dad would pick me up and walk down the long aisle. My family sat near the front, so this solemn march was always witnessed by the entire assembly of holy saints. One Sabbath, just as I was almost out the door, I called out, "Please, pray for me!" After my spanking, during the long walk back to the front, through tear-fogged eyes, I saw smiles and felt warm acceptance. I grew up a little. And I learned that people at church loved me – red-faced, rebellious, repentant me.

I remember the stormy night when Shannon, our family dog, was hit by a car. Pastor dropped whatever sanctified chore he was doing and helped my Dad wrap our whimpering, bloody friend in an old blanket. I remember when Mom and Dad let Brittany, my little sister, and me see Shannon. The wet dog smell, the broken leg, and the deep, hurting eyes tore into my seven-year-old heart. This was my first brush with the horror that lives in this world. And there sat Pastor, holding my soggy, dirty dog, stroking her hair, and gently telling her that it would be alright. I grew up a little that night. And I learned that the best sermons are not preached, but lived.

I remember JP and Marie Lewis. These old patriarchs of the church adopted our little family into their great big love. Every Sabbath they sat five rows up from the back on the right side, and between Sabbath School and church, I made it my habit to always stop by and shake JP's rough hand and hug Marie's petite shoulders. They loved me, hard and true. Something in their eyes, in their worn-out chuckles, told me that no matter what I did or how big I messed up, they would be sitting in the fifth row up from the back on the right side, loving me. One Sabbath, for one reason or another, I didn't go and shake JP's hand. Maybe I was too busy, or maybe I forgot. I don't remember why I didn't say hello to JP that day, but I do remember that his usual spot was empty the next Sabbath. Death had stolen my old friend, and I had missed my last chance to say goodbye. I grew up a little. And I learned to never be too busy to shake a hand, share a smile, and just love. JP and Marie are gone, but their old spot is not empty, and the love of Jesus that danced in their dimming eyes lives on in new faces.

I grew up in this old church. I preached my first sermon here, sang my first guitar solo here, was baptized here. I have seen babies dedicated, lovers joined, and funerals held – many lessons learned under these wooden rafters. I guess that is what church is all about. It's not a place to walk in perfect, talk perfect, and leave even more perfect. It's a place to be real, to change dirty diapers, to kneel before the Almighty. In this holy Sanctuary, where we pick up Cheerios before they are crunched under tiny feet and listen to an eight-year-old stammer through a verse in Romans, we encounter the Creator of children, the Savior of sinners. We come to church to worship, to grow, to learn. I have. I thank God for my church family. WE have grown up a little . . . together.

Lost

Jenni Sagadraca

Ancient, homeless woman
 Wrinkled
 Tattered
 Reeking of the streets

You have nothing but the smile on your face
 Why are you smiling?

Is the world yours?
 You've got fleas
 You've got rags
 You've got what the world gave you

Why are you smiling?

Content, tired eyes connect with me
 Weary
 Unhappy
 Unsure

My eyes ask the question
 I already know the answer

You know who you are
 Where you want to be

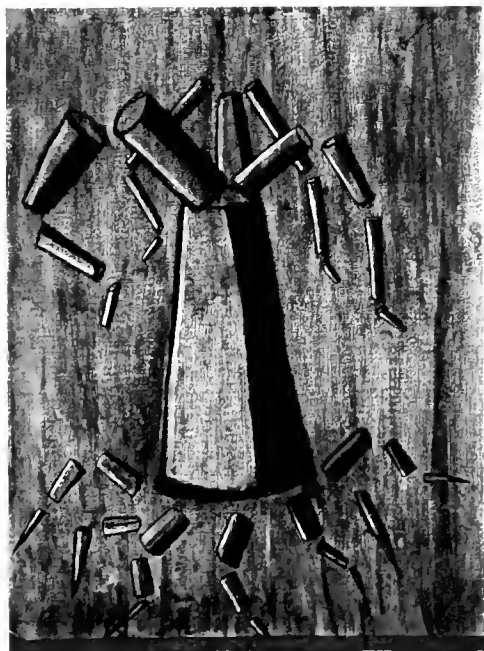
I don't even know where I am going.



Robin George



Justin Hamer



Jonathan Claussen

You used to be an open door I saw down the end of a hall called future.
 But because we didn't know the time,
 It seemed as though that hallway was being filled
 With debris of dirty climbing shoes, career handbooks, a filled journal,
 Women and men we never thought would have a chance.
 And can we just let the algae in the fish bowls of our lives grow
 As if we were two betas in separate cubicles of plastic (getting tank fever),
 Seeing an image of each other but being too dangerous to share the same
 aquarium –
 right now?

The green grows.

I hate it.
 I hate its murky blindness.
 I hate to see you fade away.
 I hate how we can't simply try things out.

But I've always been taught to be slow,
 And that through distance you can't grow.

But the thick, suffocating green grows.

Where will we be in your ten-year plan?
 Will I even exist?
 Perhaps we will have forgotten
 Like all of those people who enter through one stage door,
 Say a few profound lines, sing a proud tune, maybe even dazzle the audience to
 tears –
 But exit out the other side
 And make their way through the cold night to another playhouse.
 They made their amazing contribution.
 But the bus keeps on movin'.
 All you can do is scrunch up your face
 And try to remember a few of those lines that moved you,
 That had so much power,
 That were delivered and said in such a perfect way that you knew you could
 never forget...

It's not just that the mind is weak,
But that we make ourselves so busy.
We can create so much,
So many millions of ideas and feats:
they swirl around our minds and bodies.
Time takes us and plunges us deep into its power.
New players hop up and down, sing jazz, rock, and the melancholy song.
The hall gets so thick
You'd need a machete to tear at some of those creations you've made along the way
To even think about getting through.

Yet do you sometimes hear that simple line...
Those plain tunes that once made you feel as though everything was at perfect peace
So rare for you now?
Perhaps it's easier to make yourself drown out even that.

You can't have the live symphony,
So you throw away all your classical CDs.
And, well, it's just technology,
So far away from the music halls of Berlin or even Atlanta.

Yet to be completely gone...
The horror!
My English evokes the "Phonograph":
A story of a nuclear winter world.
But no matter the change of environment,
People still kill to hear the machine play its music,
To remember how it was and somehow believe from out of all this ash
It still could be – the fiery phoenix would rise again.

Please.
Don't forget.
We haven't reached the end of the hallway.
In the murk, there's a fish still swimming.
In the down season, the theater isn't condemned.
In the desolation, the symphony is still playing.



Elisa Fisher



Scott Kabel

I heard it's your birthday
I bought you this mylar balloon
Isn't it pretty
I think it'll last a long, long time

And it goes on and on
and on and on
Oriana, you lucky girl

Haven't you wondered
Why I've been tagging along
It's not 'cause you smell good
It's not 'cause I'm bored out of my mind

And it goes on and on
and on and on
Oriana, you lucky girl

I love when you smile
I wish that you'd smile for me
Don't you remember
You're just a girl and I'm just a guy

And it goes on and on
and on and on
Oriana, you lucky girl

It's been quite a party
And here is your mylar balloon
I'm kind of embarrassed
But couldn't you be my Valentine

And it goes on and on
and on and on
Oriana, you lucky girl
And if you want me to
I'll be done with you
Oriana, you lucky girl

But you'll still be my lucky girl



Jessica Rivera

I

This coldness chills,
I haven't felt warm in days,
Buried in this vault of ice,
Winter rules this heart.

I am waiting –

Waiting for the heat of one
Who will burn with a fire
That will blaze for eternity.

II

You feel like Spring to me,
But I'm entrenched in the coldest winter
I've ever had to endure.

What is this that beats inside my chest?
My blood feels like mercury –
It's Rising,
Rising.

My heart resists the summer thaw
Because it aches to melt
Into somebody else's arms.



Tara Lewis

Winter's Nature's Thinking Time

Whitni McDonald

Winter's nature's thinking time,
the mull-it-over,

waiting time.

When all things
now living
form huddles

and hope

for answers to spring into their brains.

Poem for the Road Home

Kayla McAuliffe

I am sitting one seat back
feigning sleep and straining
to hear above the bus's constant rumble
you – sing
silent night, holy night.

This is not a love poem.

You are the shining armor type, and
I have never needed a hero
(silent night)
like Amy does.
I noticed she laid her head on your shoulder,
but sat back up when we stopped
to turn on the heat.
(all is calm)

I sigh, lean back in my chair.
This is not a love poem;
I will not think of you tonight. I
bury my head in your pillow, but
through its stuffing,
and above the rattle of the bus,
and the road,
and the hum of my muddled thoughts,
you sing
*silent night, holy night,
sleep in heavenly
peace.*



Alan Darmody

Jenny Harlowe

Death and taxes. Yes. But the certainty of them didn't truly hit me until I was at church and had my eyes open during prayer. The certainty of taxes came before my face in a regular and timely manner, but not death. Death hides itself in the form of age, sneaking into a body until *wham!* The sudden reality startles us even though we all count the passing years. But, once in church, I saw death coming. I stood with my head bowed, staring down past the hymnals in the back of the pew to my feet. Just to the side of my strappy black heels, I could see Grandpa's wingtips. I glanced up higher to where his white hands gripped the back of the pew like a lifeline. I wondered why he didn't just sit. Grandma's hands were just beyond his, one resting on top of the other. I shifted my weight and glanced to the aisle. I looked back at my feet and wished I'd taken the old nail polish off. Then I saw Grandpa's knees start to sway a little over his shoes, and I looked up all the way. A tightness started in my stomach. Grandma's hand came over on top of his bony knuckles. "You all right, Daddy?" she whispered. He nodded his head yes. Grandma squeezed his hand and rested hers on the pew in front of her again. The tightness in my stomach stayed. I didn't close my eyes again, and I saw Grandma's hand come over to squeeze Grandpa's once more before the prayer was over.

Later in the day, Grandma and I started a puzzle of cardinals eating out of a feeder. We had a supper of popcorn and fruit in the living room while we watched TV. At nine o'clock, Grandpa was ready for bed. He pushed himself up out of his recliner and stood until he gained his balance. He took a shuffling step and then turned. He kept turning until he made a complete circle, all the while glancing around the room. Grandma and I looked up from the puzzle. "What are you looking for, Daddy?" asked Grandma.

"Oh, I'm just trying to see how to get to the bedroom," he said.

"You go in through there," she said in a small voice and pointed toward the hallway. He followed her hand toward the hallway and shuffled across the carpet, past the glass case full of model train engines and ceramic bunnies, down the narrow hallway, and through the bedroom door. The tight feeling was back in my stomach. Of everything I knew was certain, I had never felt this one so acutely: My grandpa was old.



Kelly McClurg

Done After a Place Change

Larry Tatiana Baxter

The wool is mottled black and grey.
Stitch by stitch, the plastic needle
Thrusts and pulls the peppered yarn.
The pastor hangs his head and speaks
Of death and friendship, our future, God.
His voice is flat but yet controlled.
The click of entrance makes him pause
As tardy students hurry in, disturbing
Him with just a hint of quavering grief
Quickly checked. And our class begins.
She slides her half-knitted hat
Onto her head, to check the size.
Not finished yet, she slides it off
And thrusts and pulls the peppered yarn.

In Place

Beth-Anne Vanderlaan

It's turning winter
but in Tennessee only the decorations change

As the bells and wreaths went up
you clamped down my heart
and politely said no thank you

The holly is in place
and each bright red bow is tied
But I am not in place
I am scattered about
like the forgotten autumn leaves

But if you would but
whisper my name
and say what I long to hear
then I too would be in place
to welcome this holiday cheer

Damp spring air brushes past the curtain to reach me where I sit curled up on the sofa, staring at the blank television screen. Gwen is stretched out on top of the set, her paw moving ever-so-slightly to the rhythm of a dream.

Gwen and I have had a rather tenuous relationship these past few weeks, as I've alternated between sobbing into her fur and locking her in Candice's bedroom. But tonight we've settled on a wary peace, eyeing each other skeptically from opposite corners of the living room, until Gwen's perpetual need to sleep as much as possible leaves her sprawled on the TV.

Looking at her now, I remember the night you and I found her (back when there was a "you and I," a "we," an "us"). It was after dark, and we were out on the track. You were running, and I was tagging along, providing the comic relief and insisting we walk every other lap.

She sauntered up to us just as we were completing our second mile – a skinny calico without a collar or a family. We took her to my apartment and tried, half-heartedly, to locate her owners. When no one claimed her, she became our baby.

My dad chuckled when I told him we had adopted a cat. A romantic to the core, he thought the animal would be a happy reminder of our first months together. My dad always did think we'd make it.

Gwen opens an eye and stretches a bit before returning to her nap. I smile slightly, remembering the day we named her. I wanted to call her Becky Sharp (after Vanity Fair's catty villain), but you insisted on Gwen (after Ms. Stefani). I loathed No Doubt but eventually gave in. You always could make me do that – let go of my adolescent need to have everything my way – and I loved you for it.

I've been listening to "Rock Steady" the past few days – punishing myself (though I'm not entirely sure what for). As many times as you played the CD, I never could get into the band, and now it's just another reminder (like my cat and the sweatshirt hanging by the door) of something good gone inexplicably wrong.

Glancing at the sweatshirt, I wonder what I should return to you. It seems awful to keep the pieces of you I've collected over the past year, yet heartless to thrust them all back as if I never cared.

Gwen jumps down from the television, catching my eye and pausing my thoughts. I watch her pad deliberately across the carpet, gauging my reaction. She reaches the couch and begins to rub against my ankles. Finally relenting, I bend over and scoop her up. She settles into my lap, purring softly.

As I absently stroke her head, my thoughts drift back over the last few weeks. It's hard for me to pin down exactly where we went wrong. The time simply grew us apart. I was busy with my internship at the local newspaper, and you were studying for the MCATs. Though we still ate lunch together (when we found the time), it was more out of habit than a desire to be with each other. In the beginning, we were inseparable; at the end, we were at best going through the motions.

I sink into the couch cushions, resting my head against the wall, suddenly too tired to hold it up. My fast-approaching graduation has kept me occupied for the most of the aftermath, but tonight's lull and Gwen's quiet presence have left me unable to shake the memories.

You broke up with me. It was a Thursday night, and we met for a late supper at Panera. Over chai tea and French onion soup, you told me that we were over – had been for months. I didn't cry – not then. Then I held my own, admitting that half the blame rested with me and agreeing that it was time to say good-bye. But I slipped out while you were in the bathroom and drove home, soaking my shirt with salty tears.

Night has cooled the April air. Shivering slightly, I push Gwen off my lap and move to the window. I slam it shut and lean my forehead against the chilly glass, counting stars. I still love you.

Turning from the window, I cross the room and drop back onto the sofa. Gwen stands as I curl into position, then stretches out against my right thigh. I tickle her paw and reach for the phone.

Melita Pujic



Rose Water

Stella Kim

the mahogany shelf
is oozing with life:
fitzgerald hemming
way steinbeck thor
eau shakespear mi
lay klint cummings

oh yes especially cummings we like him the most. and there are others: poe white dali.
a death wish. coffee table cancer. my eye gravitates to a framed black&white of summer – me and tess. I'm smiling with the accumulated wisdom of my 14 years but she, she's looking up and off at something that will never, ever focus. I stop my search and pick up the photograph. it's smudged a little and the glass is cracked from where I hurled it across the room following news of su expiración. you know, she was my best friend and I hated her with all my heart. you'd think that five years would dull some ache but it doesn't. cackling on the wash hot tears stolen boy friends petty thievery. these memories bleed. yelling furious laughing hilarious dying victorious – she always had illusions of grandeur. she walked off the end of a dock, her overcoat filled with pebbles, this tess and left me alone. teresa charles died of suicide. angrily, I grab the evil picture & knock it over, cracking the glass again, but this time I leave it as it should be, face down.



Nate Dubs

We are the Cinderellas who stayed home.

We set aside our tasks.

 We stepped in as substitute mothers.

 We helped choose dresses.

 We saw colors of black, crimson, and azure blue.

We ironed out stubborn wrinkles

 We persuaded immovable dress zippers.

 We said, "Suck in your gut."

We helped to apply makeup.

 We covered blemishes.

 We reddened lips.

 We darkened eyes.

 We brightened cheeks.

We gave hair advice.

 We twisted hair,

 We sprayed it,

 We curled it,

 We pinned it,

 We sprayed it again.

 We secured bits of baby's breath.

 We gave consolation for near hair disasters.

We answered cell phones.

 We gave directions.

 We told dates to wait.

We distinguished between a corsage and a boutonnière.

 We said, "Look at the bow. Guys don't wear bows."

We explained to the dates why we weren't going.

 We lied, "We don't like banquets."

We watched as the dates donned coats.

 We found purses.

 We pulled out umbrellas.

 We shed a tear as they left.



Natalie Ford

We started cleaning up the mess.

We picked up bobby pins.

We put away clothes.

We threw away the corsage wrappers.

We packed up duffel bags.

We smelled the remnants of hair spray and perfume.

We're the women who helped Princesses look beautiful.

We wished we had Valentine's dates.

But then, we're the Cinderellas who stayed home.

Falling / Whispers

Beth-Anne Vanderlaan

Stand outside
listen to the falling whispers
of wind and ice dance
together as they fall
gracefully down

Catch them bound
in my hair, in your
hair, eyelashes, and
lips.

From the cold on your
fingertips holding
mine to the warmth
of your look in
my eyes.

As we stand in
the fall of dreams
and crystallized tears
becoming precious
innocence

– there is One
who is in these white
brushes of purity in our
hair, eyelashes, lips

that is permeating our
fingers intertwined in
this February snowfall

surrounding
us in the dreams we'd forgotten
how to dream

Eye Candy

Jacki Souza

Eye candy
like the Milky Way I ate last night
sweet going down
sweet in my mouth
but heavy on the hips
heavy on my heart
when it's look don't touch
when I used to be able to touch
when the candy wasn't a feast
for only my eyes.



Jamey Houghton

Haiku

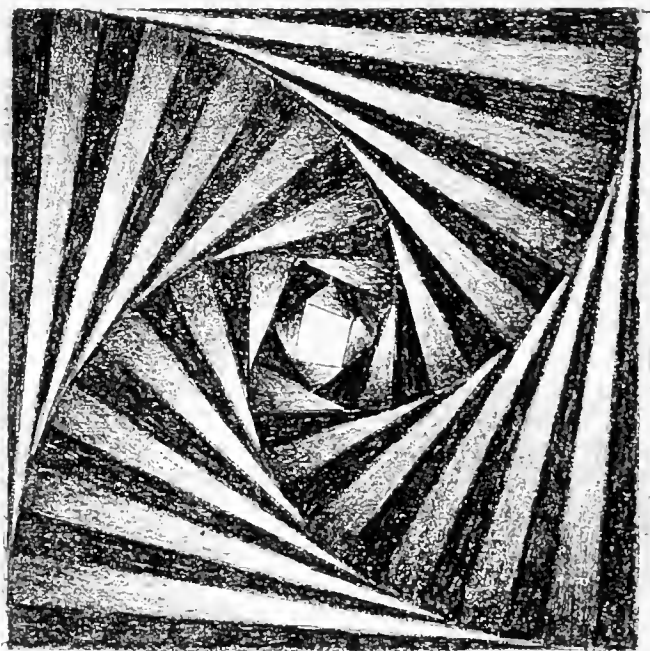
Amanda Jehle

vivid shades of red
creep over the horizon
another sunburn

Empty Room

Heidi Thompkins

My roommate moved last night. The room's half-bare
And echous with naked cement walls
And desk and shelves devoid of books. I swear
I feel I must be moving too. The halls'
Own unclaimed emptiness says more "hotel"
Than home, and more so now. I feel a need
To decorate with flowers and a doorbell
And mounds of books I don't have time to read.
Maybe I'll fill the space with Aragorn
And Legolas "life-sized" cutouts. Hey, I'm free!
I could hang Christmas lights or pictures torn
From magazines. Why is it now just me?
There's no one to come home to, not a sound
I don't produce, and I am silence-drowned.



Carrie Iverson

The River Still Runs

Ryan Litchfield

The stress of school is too much for me today. My mind is piled with so many plans, schedules, and jobs that I can actually feel their weight. Colors become drab, smells turn musty, my smile is rare. When time comes, I get in my car and head east, over pastures and deep into the mountains. My heart rises with the hills of the winding road and remains light in my chest. Through the trees, I catch flashes of the silver river. The road climbs higher, winding through the woods until the cover breaks high on a mountain pass. Down in the valley, the shimmer of winding water curves around the dark foundations of the mountains. My head begins to clear, and the burden of stress clenching my thoughts relinquishes its grasp.

I descend down into the valley. The river comes to my side and comforts me as a friend. I park my car under a shady maple tree and walk under the sea of leaves to the bank of the river. The smell of earth gives comfort of something still real in this world. I step into the cold water, and the current seems to take something away from me. Reaching for something in my mind, I realize what I have lost and watch my schedules, plans, and jobs slip downstream and out of sight around the bend in the river. Bright green plants wave long streamers against my legs as if to say, "You won't need those here."

Perfect water for trout, I think, and all I hear is the answer of whitewater. I unhook the small fly from the long rod in my hand and flick it into action. The line lengthens with every cast. After many casts, I pick a spot where I think a big rainbow waits, and I release the line. It floats through the air and lies down on the water. The white fly hovers in the air hesitantly then drops perfectly into place on the surface. It drifts with the current past a rock and into a still eddy. I watch unblinking, waiting for a strike. I stand as still as a statue in silence and almost jump when a shadow moves below. *I only imagined it*, I think. Suddenly, churning water and the fly disappears. A quick jerk sets the hook and the line is tight. I feel the weight of a large fish as it panics and swims powerfully around. It sprints up river and I follow, stumbling. It turns the other direction with so much force that I slip and let the line go slack. When I pull it again, the fish is gone, and my line is broken. I sit down on a rock defeated.

I cannot help but admire that elusive trout and its strength. When it is hooked and held down, it fights for its life with no weakness. Every thing around this river seems to have that same power. The stalking herons, the leaping trout, the deep-rooted trees, all drink it in from the water. I need that power. That is why I leave my world where things hold me down and pull me under and come to a world where strength is necessary for survival. When I am on the river, I begin to feel part of the environment, a participant in the ecosystem.

In my world, peace is a rare blessing. Simple, strong people are an endangered species. When my mind is cluttered and my heart is heavy, I will probably not be found around town. If the river still runs like a silver ribbon around the feet of the mountains - I'll be there.



Nate Dubs

The Question

Judy Clippinger

Was it fool or was it sage
Who placed his pen upon the page
And my imagination took
Past mountain high and valley brook
Beyond this mortal cage?

Would that I, with pen in hand,
Might soar the skies and plow the land
And walk the boards of some yet hidden stage.

Level
Larry Tatiana Baxter

My hands grip tight the oar that lies before
My seat as icy waves soak through the thin
Wool garment that I wear. I search for shore
In vain. I shrink away from men packed in
With me to bursting on this tiny boat.
My vision blurs when blistered hands release
The oar and clutch the rocking craft afloat
In thunder, rain, and biting wind increased
By darkness penetrating deep. For where
Is that eternal God who promises
To keep us safe? I seek and see out there
A ghost. And now all my faith vanishes.
But specter turns to solid man who boards
My craft; the storm destroyed with just His words.

Invited
Lee Andrews

It was the time before sleep.
You and I greedily crept toward
The last pink and white pill.

We anticipate in sleep
A tug to dream
Safe from crags of ice.

Outside is the dangerous world
Of a lonely knight
Seeking us with a frozen spear
In the icicled night.

Sleep will not come until morning light.

My spider-jointed fingers crawl
To your white thigh.
You, love, sweep it away
With screams of tortured delight.

Sleep well, you, as I agree to abstain.

Tossing through the waves of sheets
Warm and cold.

The water that destroyed a lifetime
Of ancient fleets.

Room Enough

Ivan Colon

Sneakers shuffle through the crowd/fingers wrap around/the strings of fifteen red balloons/he's eight years old, he's got it all/a pocket full of change/and bright blue cotton candy on a stick/You might wonder/*why is he so sad*/'cause he can't find his mom and dad/he left them by the ferris wheel/oh what he'd do/to feel them next to him/Sandals sweep across the sand/he's walking hand in hand/with the sweetest thing he's ever seen/he's convinced she'll have the spark/when his days turn/her eyes will tell him everything he'll ever need to know/But it took him by surprise/'cause one day she closed her eyes/and now he might as well be blind/the sun won't rise it won't come up this time/And is there room enough/next to all the things you hold so tightly to/and is there room enough for the hands that braved the nails for you/He will never let you go/and blind as you may be/the way He'll show/and the sun will rise again/and you'll begin/yes, you'll begin/it's not the end



Nate Dubs



Brian Geach

The Wrecking Ball

Jacki Souza

Your face is a wrecking ball to my heart,
And your body is a wonderland.
Your voice is a symphony in my ears
Conducted by an angry hand.
Your arms are the blanket

I want to wrap around myself,
But instead I have to fold it up
And give it to someone else.
Your face is a wrecking ball,
And I still fall.

Someone Died Today

Stratton Tingle

I wrote this one day after listening to some woman on NPR read this piece of literature that was simply a waste of my time. I'm sure it made her feel good about herself (she could call herself cultured), but it meant nothing to me. So, I decided it would be a good idea for me to write something just as good so that I could call myself cultured. Don't read it. It's a waste of time.

Today someone died. I was staring into her soul when the life just sort of evaporated out of her. It was a lot like one of those blazing hot summer days when you just lie on the pavement and gaze haphazardly through the heat waves, letting them turn your world into a blurry middle-Earth. I stumbled over a small boy on her floor. He was content. Just content to exist. He couldn't talk, but I knew what he meant.

The only way that she was going to go back to him was if he changed his ways. Sure, he was nice, and he had a steady job. But he was addicted to professional wrestling. You know, the kind where the greasy, jerry-curled, mammoth-sized dude struts out to the tune of "Girls, Girls, Girls" or some other cock-rock cliché. He would come home after work, grab a cold beer, sit in his recliner, and leave this world. For four straight hours, both time and space became non-existent as he lost himself in a cacophony of egos and bad acting.

It was dusk when it flew away. It was like watching the embers of a fire flitter up into a clear October sky. It was not a bad thing.



Ariel Turner

Heidi Martella

Heidi Martella

Straight.
Plain.
Brown –
My hair.
Ordinary.
I thought.
Peanut butter
And honey.
She said.
Extraordinary.

Die Hard

Kelly McAuliffe


The perpetual action hero, you
strode into my life,
snatching me up in your right arm and
slaying the villain with your left –
commandeering my heart for a
jarring ninety-minute ride.
You seized each moment,
allowing me only the occasional
line of dialogue and a
scream or two.

But this is *my* story.

So, in the retelling,
I will reduce *you* to a supporting character,
then a cameo,
and finally
the “man with gun” in
scene four.

Brett Melini





Kayla McAuliffe

As children,
we came here with our nets and buckets, caught
minnows, salamanders
(I wouldn't touch them). We swore:
friends forever.

Today
I strip the socks from my feet and follow
you through the icy water
to where the crayfish
still hide.
To you – still friends. To me –

But haven't I been
a pin-prick a day
lately? You've become bitter and
heavy. I know
I've retaliated. Still friends –
you don't know? It isn't true.
You see,

I still won't
touch the crayfish, but you,
ha, you won't allow me my
shortcomings anymore.

That's how we've changed.

Rent Out

Felicia Ford

My house is growing quieter
Now that it's free of men;
The corner that you occupied
Is vacant once again.

No man's land, I call it.

You haven't seemed to notice
Your eviction – my release,
But I've gently led you out
And closed the door. I am at peace.

You're on the step now, bags and all.

Safe travels, my old friend.
May your future home be blessed,
But be happy when you think of
How you stayed here as a guest.

And now?

I'll change the sheets and clear the table,
Open windows, mow the grass.
I will make this little house of mine
Clean. For time will pass.

And then, maybe then, I'll feel like renting out again.

[untitled]

Kristen Eller

The unspoken fact hung out to dry
Between them.
Unanswered questions
Stand up, parading between his laughter
And the dropping of her eyes
When he would like to capture
And clasp them.
The liberty he sometimes takes to gaze:
Breathing in, memorizing and studying her as a
Good line in an old poem.
She counts the seconds by the throb
She sees pulsing in one lone vein's crossing.
It suffices to hold her consciously from the study
She's become,
His eyes combing, reading through her eyes
Things perhaps not ready to be read.



Elisa Fisher

Paint Me a Sunset

Patricia Porawski

Paint me sunsets with
Right-handed brush strokes,
Across the canvas of
South Carolina skies.

A mere spectator from
My passengerside window,
I am admitted to this rare display
Free of charge.

As Maternal Daylight yawns wearily,
Gold joins hands with Crimson
And Lavender hues.

Twirling each other in circles,
They ring-around-the-rosey
On the horizon until
Paternal Twilight tucks them
In under a blanket of stars.

(For Rachel and Ronald)

Rachel's Diamonds

Heidi Thompson

The chocolate pleases her who merry is.
No maiden will sit idly when the sweet
is smooth and luscious and perchance smells black.
It is not fluff but like some seemly rock
crushed by immortal goddesses in jest
that then could make a diamond envious.



Ivan Delgado

I Soon Shall See

Ivan Colon

One fine field of green in between us/and one bright blue sky above us/and one singing breeze
breathing 'round us/and you, my love, I soon shall see/I'll carve you a sunset out of the daylight/so you
can find your way back home alright/I sit on the edge of this cloud you left me on/and you, my love, I
soon shall see/While you are gone painting your pictures new/love won't you remember these pictures
I'm sending you/and don't stay away if your heart is calling you/and you, my love, I soon shall see.

The Man He Seemed

Kayla McAuliffe

In February, Katie became powerfully convinced that nobody at all was quite what they seemed. Admittedly, she formed this conviction absurdly quickly, but she had good reason for it. You see, she had quite accidentally discovered (through a friend of a friend of his sister) that Brendan Thomas was going to therapy for anger management. Now it wasn't that Brendan Thomas needed *anger management*. It was that *Brendan Thomas* needed anger management – Brendan Thomas who for years had been listening to her prattle on about this guy and that class, all the while insisting that he himself had nothing to share. Obviously, that wasn't true. He needed anger management therapy. There had to be a story there.

Katie's faith in people was thus destroyed, and she became certain that everyone must have similar skeletons in his closet. She intended to discover them. She began to notice the slightest inconsistencies. Her sister, for instance, complained one day about how she hated driving. Who would've guessed that? Her sister always drove. Her roommate religiously kept a journal. Who would do that unless she had secrets?

Katie had no secrets. Katie was exactly what she seemed. This didn't seem quite fair when everyone else was hiding something. So Katie decided she must cultivate some secrets at once.

By March, Katie had a secret boyfriend. She didn't tell her sister or her roommate. She especially didn't tell Brendan Thomas, who had been lying to her all these years. She didn't tell anyone anything about her boyfriend, and she didn't tell her boyfriend anything about anyone else. Now Katie figured she was on the right track.

By April, Katie didn't tell anyone anything. Her roommate began to worry. Her sister suggested therapy. Katie became very angry at the idea. It reminded her of Brendan Thomas and his monstrous betrayal.

As for Brendan Thomas, they still got on quite well, although Brendan did most of the talking these days. Katie listened very carefully to everything he said and always hoped he would one day confess his anger management problems to her. But he never did. He kept it to himself. Katie kept keeping things to herself, too.

One day the secret boyfriend broke up with Katie. Katie had no one to talk to about this. She would have to console herself. She drove to Starbucks. Unfortunately, Brendan Thomas was already at Starbucks when she got there. He flagged her over to his table.

Katie bought her coffee and sat down across the table from Brendan. He asked her how her day was. She said it was fine. She asked him how his day was. He said it was fine. Katie could not keep things to herself any longer.

"My boyfriend broke up with me," she burst.

Brendan Thomas was surprised. "I'm sorry," he said. He frowned at his coffee. Then he asked, "When did you get a boyfriend?"

"March," said Katie.

"You never told me you had a boyfriend," said Brendan. He looked genuinely hurt that she'd been keeping secrets from him. Katie felt this was very hypocritical. He'd started it.

"You never told me you were going to therapy for anger management!" she accused.

Brendan looked surprised again. "I'm not," he said. "Who told you that?"

Katie couldn't remember. A friend of a friend of his sister.

"I'm not," Brendan repeated. Katie still looked skeptical. "I swear," Brendan added.

When Brendan Thomas swore things, he was always telling the truth. Katie thought about this for a long time. She thought about everything. What did it matter if her sister hated driving? Who really cared if her roommate kept a journal? Katie looked across the table at Brendan Thomas.

And she decided maybe some people were exactly what they seemed.

"I have a lot to tell you," Katie said to Brendan. "When was the last time we actually talked?"

"It's been a while," Brendan said, and he smiled.

Natalie Ford



Whitni McDonald

The girl received whatever they gave,
Was history's most obliging slave,
Then took her secret to her grave

And she was very very brave.

She always chose:

To catch the cat that missed the mice,
To skate on sand instead of ice,
To eat the worm forsaking rice

To play the game with loaded dice.

But no one knows:

How she met her pirate friend,
How her sails mixed fire with wind,
How the seahorse plays pretend,

Or how she met her gruesome end.



Sonya Reaves

Stratton Tingle

Miss your breath against my neck.
This bed's now full of emptiness.
Sit up awake, no sleep tonight.
Snow out there, but cold's inside.

Thought I heard your voice today,
then caught myself – it died away.
As I recall, I also smiled
for memories lost so great a while.

Because a friend like you,
a friend like you...
I never had.

Like he who sang of fire and rain.
I've known that hurt and felt that pain.
I'm not the first to walk this road,
but I sure as hell walk it alone.

Now grit my teeth and close my eyes.
Head in my hands but I dont cry.
The stars fade out – the Son fades in.
I wanna sleep, but the day begins.

A friend like you,
a friend like you...
I never had.

DATE DUE

